

Realstars Ideell Förening Sverige



Gothenburg, September 8, 2022

To our stakeholders,

I am pleased to confirm that RealStars Ideell Förening Sverige (RealStars) reaffirms its support for the Ten Principles of the United Nations Global Compact with respect to Human Rights, Labour, Environment and Anti-Corruption.

In this Communication on Engagement, we describe how we continually improve the integration of the Global Compact and its principles into our strategy and daily operations. We also commit to sharing this information with our stakeholders using our primary channels of communication.

Sincerely yours,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Malin Roux Johansson".

Malin Roux Johansson
Co-Founder & Secretary-General

www.realstars.eu

Communication on Engagement (COE) - the Global Compact Period: January 2019-December 2021

RealStars Ideell Förening Sverige (RealStars) has been a participant of the Global Compact since 2019.

RealStars is an independent non-profit organisation founded in 2010. The organisation strives to achieve a better world free from sex-trafficking. RealStars works both nationally and within the European Union through campaigns and advocacy. We illustrate our message of Fair sex through design, art, and fashion.

RealStars believes in the equal value of every individual and in everyone's right to freedom.

- RealStars fights for the realisation of Fair Sex for everyone. This implies sex on equal terms, with respect and without violence and coercion.

RealStars works on three different levels:

- 1) We work on EU level for appropriate legislations and commitment to reduce demand that fosters all trafficking.
- 2) We collaborate with corporations to integrate human trafficking issues in corporate social responsibility efforts.
- 3) We engage individuals in our work for Fair sex through campaigns and school collaborations.

Our work supports gender equality and fundamental human rights

RealStars works according to our mission to counteract and putting an end to sex-trafficking. We focus on its root cause which is the demand for sexual services. This is crucial since it is the demand that fosters all trafficking and makes it profitable. We conduct a wide range of prevention activities which focus on the acceleration of accountability in society and the fulfilment of international human rights principles.

RealStars supports especially Global Compacts' principles 1, 2 and 4.

Human Rights

Principle 1: Businesses should support and respect the protection of internationally proclaimed human rights; and

Principle 2: make sure that they are not complicit in human rights abuses.

Labour

Principle 4: the elimination of all forms of forced and compulsory labour;

The United Nations' Global Goals 5, 8 and 16.

Sustainable Development Goal 5 – Gender Equality:

Gender equality is achieved when women, men, girls, and boys have equal rights, conditions and opportunities, and the power to shape their own lives and contribute to the development of society.

- Sustainable Development Goal 5.2: Eliminate all forms of violence against all women and girls in the public and private spheres, including trafficking and sexual and other types of exploitation.

Sustainable Development Goal 8 – Decent Work and Economic Growth:

Promote sustained, inclusive, and sustainable economic growth, full and productive employment, and decent work for all.

- Sustainable Development Goal 8.8: Protect labour rights and promote safe and secure working environments for all workers, including migrant workers, in particular women migrants, and those in precarious employment.

Sustainable Development Goal 16 – Peace Justice and Strong Institutions:

Promote peaceful and inclusive societies for sustainable development, provide access to justice for all and build effective, accountable, and inclusive institutions at all levels.

- Sustainable Development Goal 16.2: End abuse, exploitation, trafficking, and all forms of violence against and torture of children.

The United Nations 1979 Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW) that asks states to “take all appropriate measures, including legislation, to suppress all forms of traffic in women and exploitation of prostitution of women”.

“Trafficking for sexual purposes is deeply rooted in a broader problem that is gender inequality. A gender perspective is necessary to comprehend this criminal phenomenon. Unfortunately, gender inequality leads to the conception of women as objects to be used for sexual enjoyment.”

“It is recognized that prostitution affect both the individual and society as a whole and are an obstacle to gender equality and development, participating in the labor market and in society on the same terms as men and boys.”

Activities and results

During the reporting period the activities have been focused on both the private sector, schools, awareness in society and on legislative work within Sweden and EU. For more details, please see separate annual reports 2019, 2020 and 2021 + additional links below.

Important milestones

2019

Prevention among businesses – Business against trafficking

- During the year the project “Business against trafficking” was launched within three different areas:

1. Massage/Thai-massage saloons -

Result: An informative movie and a labelling concept against sexual services. Information events with 30 participants in Malmö, Stockholm, and Gothenburg. Visits to 80 massage saloons. The labelling concept has been shared to 500 saloons. For more information, please click on the [link](#).

2. Hotels and tourism sector -

Result: Updated information about the established concept [Hotels against trafficking](#) + sharing of the training movie to 120 hotels + competence efforts in Stockholm, Gothenburg, and Malmö to almost 100 participants.

3. Large companies -

Result: RealStars conducted the study “[Swedish listed companies work to counteract sexual exploitation](#)”. The study shows that almost 80 percent of the companies surveyed lack guidelines related to human trafficking for sexual purposes and prostitution. Only one out of five companies have clear guidelines in their code of conduct or travel policy on the prohibition of sex purchases on business trips. On the other hand, 75 percent of the companies see a risk of sex-purchase during business trips and 10 percent see risks associated with exhibitions and events.

- After the study we also launched a [company package](#) how to support companies on how to work against sexual exploitation and a dialogue with Global Compact Network Sweden to arrange a webinar related to the above study and start engaging with companies on a broader scope. Due to the pandemic the concept has been delayed in implementation.

Prevention in schools

- RealStars continued to involve the young generation and schools for discussions and engagement in trafficking issues – [For Fair Sex](#). Realstars informs about prostitution and other form of sexual violence. The workshops address the discussion of norms and attitudes about the purchase of “sex” in a modern society and challenge attitudes and norms related to gender inequality (a gender perspective). It is critical to dispel the myths of prostitution, i.e., prostitution as a “work” of free choice and to promote freedom and sex on equal terms. By doing so we can contribute to a better society free from trafficking and other forms of sexual abuse.

- We have involved the students to come up with ideas to combat trafficking and reduce demand for “sexual services”. The young generation got to learn about human trafficking and created art on the subject in our section [Art and Creativity for Fair Sex by Young People](#). We also used tools such as an educational video game called [“Fair Sex Network”](#) – a training program to be an agent in the fight against trafficking and other human rights abuses.

International and national work

- Strategic collaboration as a member in the EU commission’s platform – EU Civil Society Platform. Please see the movie “Leaving no one behind – [Breaking the silence on trafficking for sexual exploitation](#).”

- Strategic collaboration with the platform “Brussels Call-Together for a Europe free from prostitution”.

- The campaign: For Fair Sex – Against Trafficking” was an important tool to influence on European legislation.

- Participation in the Swedish Platform Civil Society against Human Trafficking as a member of the board.

- Cooperation with bars, restaurants, hotels and cafés during the European anti-trafficking day, 18th of October, to share our message “We don’t welcome sex buyers, we don’t welcome sex trafficking.”

Active presence in media & press

- RealStars has shared the result from the study about Swedish listed companies and the situation at Thai-massage saloons, 8 articles have been published in national newspapers.

2020

International and national work

- Continued collaboration within the existing platforms EU Civil Society Platform, “Brussels Call-Together for a Europe free from prostitution” and the Swedish Platform Civil Society against Human Trafficking, took place digitally.

- Participation in roundtable discussions regarding human trafficking and prostitution organized by the Swedish government.

- RealStars took part in influencing changes in the current sex purchase legislation.

- During the EU’s anti-trafficking day RealStars gathered local politicians and company representatives to discuss sex-trafficking and how to avoid it.

Campaign: Hire a girlfriend

- The campaign "Hire a girlfriend" was a campaign with the aim to bring attention to the issue related to sugar dating by launching a faked website: hyrflickvän.se with a lot of facts about sugar dating and how to get help if you are abused or are the abuser. The campaign was collaboration in between Realstars and Child10. Result: 808 men registered to hire a girlfriend. 16.6% searched for girls under 18 years of age. Through the campaign and the website, we have succeeded to increase the awareness of this issue.
- Another element to the campaign was to launch a the SIFO-report which shows that 1 out of 7 men has a positive attitude to people buying sex and another report: "The world of the sex buyer". Result: the campaign resulted in 150 articles and an estimated 11 million readers.

Active presence in media & press

- RealStars was extremely busy on social media and in the press, a lot related to the campaign: Hire a girlfriend and the launched reports.

Prevention among businesses

Due to the pandemic the work towards businesses was limited.

2021

International and national work

- Continued collaboration within the existing platforms EU Civil Society Platform, "Brussels Call-Together for a Europe free from prostitution" and the Swedish platform "Civla Sverige mot människohandel" took place digitally.
- Participation in a Nordic cooperation at the seminar "Nordic Best Practices against Trafficking in Human Beings", November.
- Active role in the digital conference "How to put an end to the digital brothels" in May, 1,600 participants and a follow-up conference on the same theme in November.
- RealStars acted moderator at a digital one-day event related to digital brothels and sugar dating.

The project "Växtkraft Thai"

- The aim has been to support and empower the women working at Thai-massage saloons in Sweden, facing the risks for sexual abuse & threat from men buying massage. Approximately 50 women have received support. For more information click on the [link](#).

"Digital brothels"

During the year RealStars and other organizations have brought attention to the online dimension of trafficking and the so called "escort online sites" which fuels offline sexual exploitation and violence against women. We organized two national conferences and with politicians and experts we discussed the current problem with digital brothels and online trafficking. The owners of the websites must be held accountable for procuring human trafficking, despite the whereabouts of the websites. Therefore, in collaboration with other organizations Realstars filed a police report regarding four sex buying sites which addresses Swedish sex buyers, to investigate them, and assure that "digital brothels", where women and children are sold, are shut down. This is a long-term goal as there are legal challenges because different countries are involved.

Active presence in media & press

- RealStars has shared its knowledge and worries about the present situation at Thai-massage saloons and at the digital brothels, 7 articles have been published in national newspapers.

Auction against trafficking + award

- On the EU anti-trafficking day, 18th of October, an auction against trafficking was organized as well as an event with local politicians.

- RealStars was awarded the winner in the Diversity Index Award in the category gender.

Prevention among businesses

Due to the pandemic the work towards businesses has been limited, and most of the work has been focused on the hotel sector.

Prevention in the private sector

However, the involvement of the private sector is crucial to effectively address the issue of trafficking.

We address trafficking according to risk, i.e., high-risk sectors – such as financial services, communication networks, hotels – which are indirectly facilitating the business of trafficking by providing services to the perpetrators. However, all companies also meet challenges in situations when employees are paying for sex during business trips.

RealStars encourages and supports corporations to incorporate explicit policies and actions against human trafficking as a part of their own CSR-work. Today, Realstars' Business Against Trafficking platform is seeing growing interest in tackling this very sensitive issue.

RealStars engages with hotels, and our tailored program - Hotels Against Trafficking - has helped hotels develop appropriate responses, including establishing policies for zero tolerance, training staff in order to identify sex trafficking and prostitution as well as prevention through labels and communication in the hotels. Additionally, the initiative involves the tourism industry in general with different joint efforts including education and activities to strengthen the preventive work before events and to promote a trafficking-free tourism industry.